

County of Los Angeles Public Library
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Library

MARGARET DONNELLAN TODD
COUNTY LIBRARIAN

May 2, 2006

TO: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich
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Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe

FROM: Margaret Donnellan Todd *MDT*
County Librarian

Robert B. Taylor *Robert B. Taylor*
Chief Probation Officer

Dr. Darline P. Robles *DR*
Superintendent, Office of Education

SUBJECT: **BOARD REPORT – LIBRARY CARDS AND BOOKMOBILE FOR
PROBATION YOUTH**

On December 20, 2005, on motion by Supervisor Knabe and with a unanimous vote, the Board of Supervisors instructed the County Librarian, Chief Probation Officer and Superintendent of Schools were instructed to develop a plan to provide each student in County Probation camps and halls with a library card; and in conjunction with the Chief Administrative Officer to identify the necessary funding to institute a bookmobile to provide mobile library services to the students.

A collaborative task force from the Public Library, Probation Department and the County Office of Education worked together to define the goal of the project and to develop an action plan to carry out that goal.

Goal: All students under the age of 18 who are enrolled in Juvenile Court schools administered by the Los Angeles County Office of Education will be introduced to the resources available at their community public library to support their educational and literacy efforts upon returning to their homes.

During this study, the task force explored various methods to provide library service including a comparison of the cost to provide bookmobile service at the camps to the cost of establishing freestanding libraries at each camp. Clearly, the costs to provide continuing operations and staff for a freestanding library at each of the camps are prohibitive. The task force also explored the costs of adding library services at Los Padrinos and Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Halls, as well as improving library services at Central Juvenile Hall.

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The task force recommendations are as follows:

1. The Library and Probation Departments should implement a process by which every young person processed into the probation system will receive a library card upon their release. The start-up cost is \$15,000. Annual ongoing costs are \$44,000.
2. A bookmobile service should be established at eight camps (located at three sites) on a pilot basis. This service would be specifically designed to meet the needs of incarcerated youth. The start-up cost is \$385,000 for the purchase and equipping of the bookmobile. Annual ongoing costs would be \$400,000.
3. Libraries should be established at Los Padrinos and Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Halls, and the library at Central Juvenile Hall should be upgraded. One-time costs at Central Juvenile Hall are \$65,000 for books and computers. Public Library costs to establish libraries at the other two halls are \$260,000 (ongoing annual costs of \$220,000 for staff and \$40,000 for collections) and \$80,000 one-time cost (start-up collection and supplies). Costs for facility remodeling, furnishings and computers at the halls would need to be determined.

Each of these three recommendations includes an evaluation component to determine the success of the project based on specific criteria.

If implemented, this program will result in improved library services to Probation clientele, consistent with the County's strategic goals of service excellence and children's and families' well-being.

The following is specific information for each of the recommendations:

LIBRARY CARD PROGRAM

Effective July 1, 2006, each student in the Probation camps and halls will be issued a County Library Card.

- Staff from the Probation Department will introduce each student entering the Juvenile Halls to the resources and services of the Public Library. During this orientation, they will fill out a simplified library card application.
- The completed applications will be delivered to the County Library where the applications will be processed within 24 hours and a library card issued in the student's name. This library card will be packaged in an information folder. The folder will list addresses of County libraries and information on library services.
- The library card package will be placed in the student's permanent file. When the bookmobile service is started at pilot camp sites, the students will be issued a temporary laminated paper card to use on the bookmobile.

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- When a minor is released from custody (either from the Hall or Probation Camp), Probation staff will give the student a permanent library card to take home. As part of the release process, Probation staff will encourage the student to visit a local library and will review information about the Public Library with students and parents.
- Upon release of the minors from camp, the aftercare Deputy Probation Officers (DPO) will continue working with them on continuing their involvement in library services. The aftercare DPOs will:
 - ✓ Include uses of library services in the aftercare case plan
 - ✓ Include outcome goals for use of library card in the aftercare case plan
 - ✓ Include use of online tutoring as an element in case planning
 - ✓ Refer library services (including library card) in court reports
- By September 2006, the Los Angeles County Office of Education will develop a promotional DVD about County Library services. When the DVD is produced, it will be presented to the students during their orientation session.
- By September 2006, a lesson plan and curriculum resources on the library will be available through the Accelerating My Future classes, as part of the students' first ten days in juvenile hall.

One-Time Start-up Costs:	<u>\$15,000</u>	
• Development of an educational videotape to use during orientation		\$10,000
• Evaluation of the program by a consultant		\$ 5,000
Ongoing Costs: (annually)	<u>\$44,000</u>	
• Library staff to process library cards		\$24,000
• Printing and duplication		\$20,000

BOOKMOBILE SERVICE TO CAMPS

Effective July 1, 2007, a pilot program will be established to introduce bookmobile services at selected Probation camps.

It is important that youth in the Probation camps increase their literacy skills and their ability to navigate in the information world. Young people who are not literate and who cannot readily search for information, either through print or online sources, are at an extreme disadvantage. The vision of bookmobile service is to motivate these young people to become independent learners. This program will assist them to improve their literacy skills as well as prepare them to feel comfortable in a public library. For these young people, the Public Library can be a source of support and information, providing public computers, books, career information, reference help, etc.

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For the bookmobile service to have a meaningful impact on the youth in the Probation camps, it must be designed specifically for their special needs. It is important that students have regular exposure to the bookmobile and its services. The task force recommends that, ideally, each student have the opportunity to visit the bookmobile at least twice a month. In order to maintain an appropriate level of security, only 8 to 10 students can enter at one time. Therefore, a full day of service at each site every two weeks will be necessary. The task force recommends that a pilot program be set up at eight Probation camps. This includes Camp Challenger in Lancaster which houses six camps on adjacent campuses and two additional camps, to be determined.

The bookmobile service will have a librarian and staff. Students will have access to paperback books specifically selected to meet their interests and reading levels. Computers will be available with all the databases of the County Library and with the Library's Live Homework Help online tutoring service. The service design will include special programs such as guest authors and speakers. The County Office of Education will work closely with the Library and Probation Departments to ensure that there is a direct link with the classroom curriculum. A temporary laminated paper library card will be issued to students at the pilot sites to allow them to check out materials on the bookmobile. They will receive their permanent library cards upon release from the camps.

Bookmobiles are made to order and require approximately 12 months from order to delivery. During the one-year order period, the task force recommends that the librarian selected to operate the bookmobile service begin regular visits to the camps making some paperback books and programming available. During that time, the librarian will design the service model and order the collection so that the bookmobile can begin service within 45 days of delivery.

A critical part of this program will be the evaluation. The task force recommends that an outside expert consultant be engaged to determine if this model supports the desired outcomes.

Estimated total cost to implement the pilot bookmobile service:

One-Time Start-up Costs:	<u>\$385,000</u>	
• Bookmobile design and construction (including 4 computers)		\$315,000
• Start-up collection		\$ 50,000
• Evaluation		\$ 20,000
Ongoing Costs:	<u>\$400,000 annually</u>	
• Bookmobile staff		\$150,000
• Ongoing operations (Includes books, maintenance, programming, and administration costs)		\$200,000
• Annual vehicle replacement fund		\$ 50,000

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COST SUMMARY FOR LIBRARY CARD PROGRAM AND BOOKMOBILE SERVICE

Total one-time costs to implement both library card and bookmobile projects:	\$400,000
Total Annual Operating Cost:	\$444,000

LIBRARIES AT JUVENILE HALLS

The third recommendation of the task force is to establish libraries at each of the juvenile halls. The Probation Department currently contracts with the County Library to provide library service at Central Juvenile Hall. The service consists of a small library collection and two full-time staff members who work closely with teachers at the school to provide resources and library skills training. The task force recommends expanding library services at Central Juvenile Hall including an enhanced book collection and the installation of computers in order to connect the Hall with the electronic resources of the Library. The task force also recommends the establishment of similar libraries in Los Padrinos and Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Halls.

Estimated cost to expand services at Central Juvenile Hall: \$65,000

- Books and Materials Enhancement costs at Central Hall \$50,000
- Computer Upgrade Costs \$15,000

Estimated total cost to add library service for Los Padrinos and Nidorf:

One-Time Start-up Costs: (does not include facility refurbishment costs)	<u>\$80,000</u>	
• Start-up Collections		\$ 75,000
• Supplies		\$ 5,000
• Facility remodeling costs, including furnishings and computers (to be determined)		

Annual Ongoing Costs: \$260,000
(\$220,000 for staff and \$40,000 for collection)

Funding for these projects is not included in the 2006-07 budgets for the Public Library Department, Probation Department, or Office of Education.

MDT:mo

c: Board Liaisons
Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors